

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

news release

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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE NAMES NEW ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

A top environmental lawyer for the Interior Department, who is also a wildlife biologist, has been tapped by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Lynn A. Greenwalt to head up the agency's programs on endangered species and the multimillion dollar Federal grants to the States.

Ronald E. Lambertson, 38, Assistant Solicitor of Interior for Fish and Wildlife, succeeds Keith M. Schreiner as Associate Director-Federal Assistance. Schreiner is now Area Director of the Service's Alaska office.

"With his scientific and legal training, Ron Lambertson is uniquely qualified to guide one of the Service's most sensitive programs," Greenwalt said. "His extensive involvement with endangered species matters make him a definite asset to the Agency and a strong, effective voice for the resources it serves. I am delighted to welcome him as one of my chief advisors and administrators."

As Associate Director, Lambertson will be responsible for administering the complex Endangered Species Act and its provisions on listing, reclassification, designation of critical habitat, recovery, and protection of imperiled species, and also for consulting with other Federal agencies on projects that could affect protected species. He will also direct this country's implementation of a 54-nation treaty, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, and will oversee the issuance of permits for activities with species listed by both the Act and the Convention. In addition, he will be responsible for dispensing some \$110 million a year to the States and territories for fish and wildlife restoration and enhancement projects.

Lambertson joined the Department's legal staff in 1970 after receiving his law degree from the University of Colorado and rose to the rank of Assistant Solicitor in 1974, becoming one of the youngest attorneys appointed to that position. As Assistant Solicitor for Fish and Wildlife, he has served as the Fish and Wildlife Service's chief legal advisor and has been deeply involved in all management aspects of the agency's programs, particularly endangered species.

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He participated in preparing the successful legal brief filed before the Supreme Court in the snail darter-Tellico Dam case and has served on a number of endangered species consultation teams, including those for the Tellico Dam and the Miami jetport projects. Earlier, he had helped develop the procedures for conducting Endangered Species Act "section 7" consultations that have now been adopted as regulations. In all but a few cases, these procedures have assured both adequate protection for endangered and threatened species and completion of Federal projects. Lambertson also was instrumental in successfully resolving litigation against the Federal grant-in-aid program that threatened for a time to cut off funds to the States. He received the Department's Meritorious Service Award in 1976 for his contributions to conservation and environmental law.

Lambertson received his undergraduate degree in wildlife management at Colorado State University and spent 4 summers taking part in field research projects for the Colorado Division of Game, Fish and Parks and the National Park Service. His published research paper, "Administrative Problems in the Yellowstone Ecosystem," was prepared under a grant from the Ford Foundation.

A native of Adams County, Colorado, Lambertson now lives in Silver Spring, Maryland, with his wife Bonnie and their two daughters.

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